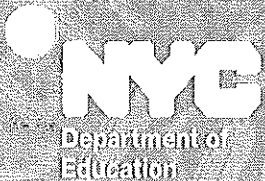


A FAMILY GUIDE TO

# • Preschool Special Education Services



Office of the Mayor  
Carmen Fariña  
Chancellor

2017-2018

## Languages Other Than English: For Families

<p>إذا كانت هذه اللغة هي لغتك الأصلية، فإن دليل العائلات متوفر بهذه اللغة. اطلب نسخة بلغتك الأصلية من الموظف الذي تعمل معه، أو احصل عليها من الموقع الإلكتروني المذكور أدناه.</p>
<p>এটি যদি আপনার দেশীয় ভাষা হয়, এই ভাষায় আপনি কামিলি গাইড পাবেন। আপনার দেশীয় ভাষায় একটি কপি জন্য আপনার সাথে কাজ করে এমন একজন পেশাজীবীকে জিজ্ঞাস করুন অথবা নিচের ওয়েবসাইটে এটি পাবেন।</p>
<p>如果這是您的母語，家庭指南有這種語言的版本。 向跟您一起的專家索取一份您母語版本的指南，或者到以下網站查看。</p>
<p>Si le français est votre langue maternelle, la version traduite du Guide des familles dans cette langue est disponible. Prière de demander au membre du personnel qui vous épaulé, la version traduite de ce guide dans votre langue maternelle ou consultez-la sur le site internet indiqué ci-après.</p>
<p>Si w ap li sa a nan lang Kreyòl, Gid pou Fanmi an disponib an Kreyòl. Mande pwofesyonèl k ap travay avèk ou a pou ba w yon kopi, oswa ale sou sitwèb ki pi ba a pou jwenn Gid la nan lang Kreyòl.</p>
<p>이것이 귀하의 모국어라면, 가정 안내서가 한국어로 준비되어 있습니다. 함께 일하는 전문가에게 한국어 번역본에 대해 문의하시거나 아래 웹사이트에서 검색해 보십시오.</p>
<p>Это Руководство для родителей переведено на русский язык. Обращайтесь к специалисту, работающему с ребенком, или на нижеуказанный веб-сайт.</p>
<p>Si este es su idioma natal, la guía familiar está disponible en este idioma. Pida un ejemplar en su idioma al profesional que lo está ayudando, o búsquela en el sitio web a continuación.</p>
<p>اگر یہ آپکی آبائی زبان ہے، اہل خانہ کے لیے رہنمائی کتابچہ اس زبان میں دستیاب ہے۔ آپ جس پیشہ ور کے ساتھ کام کر رہے ہیں ان سے اپنی آبائی زبان میں ایک کاپی کی درخواست کریں یا ذیل کی ویب سائٹ سے حاصل کریں۔</p>

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/FamilyResources/GuidesDocuments/default.htm#Preschool>

<p>Εάν αυτή είναι η μητρική σας γλώσσα, ο οικογενειακός οδηγός δεν είναι διαθέσιμος σε αυτή τη γλώσσα αυτή τη χρονική στιγμή. Ζητήστε βοήθεια από τον επαγγελματία με τον οποίο συνεργάζεστε.</p>
<p>מדריך המשפחה אינו זמין בשלב זה בשפה המבוקשת. במידה זו אינה שפת האם שלך, אנא בקש סיוע מאיש המקצוע שעובד עימך.</p>
<p>यदि यह आपकी मूल भाषा है, तो इस समय इस भाषा में परिवार गाइड उपलब्ध नहीं है। मदद के लिए उस पेशेवर से पूछें जिसके साथ आप काम कर रहे हैं।</p>
<p>これがあなたの母国語である場合、現時点ではこの言語でファミリーガイドを利用できません。 専門の担当者にご相談ください。</p>
<p>यदि यो तपाईंको मातृ भाषा हो भने यस समयमा परिवार निर्देशिका यो भाषाको लागि उपलब्ध छैन। सहयोगको लागि आफूले काम गर्ने पेशेवर व्यक्तिसँग सोध्नुहोस्।</p>
<p>Jeśli to Twój język ojczysty, przewodnik rodzinny nie jest obecnie dostępny w tym języku. Poproś o pomoc specjalistę, z którym współpracujesz.</p>
<p>Se este for seu idioma materno, o guia familiar não está disponível em sua língua no momento. Peça ajuda ao profissional que está trabalhando com você.</p>
<p>ਜੇ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਾਤ-ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਸ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਡੈਰਿਵੇਟਿਵ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਅਧਿਕਾਰਤ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਪੇਸ਼ੇਵਰ ਤੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ ਕਰੋ।</p>
<p>Ak je Váš rodný jazyk tento, potom v súčasnosti nie je rodinná príručka prístupná vo Vašom jazyku. O pomoc požiadajte odborného pracovníka, s ktorým pracujete.</p>
<p>གལ་སྲིད་དེ་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་སྐད་ཡིན་ནམ་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་སྐད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཡིག་གི་སྐོར་གྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་ལྟོགས་པའི་ལྟར་གྱི་ ལྷན་སྐྱེས་སྐད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཡིག་གི་སྐོར་གྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་ལྟོགས་པའི་ལྟར་གྱི་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་སྐད་ཀྱི་སྐོར་གྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་ལྟོགས་པའི་ལྟར་གྱི་</p>
<p>Якщо це ваша рідна мова, то на цей час посібник для родини цією мовою недоступний. Зверніться за допомогою до професіонала, який з вами працює.</p>
<p>אויב דאס איז אייער ערשטע שפראך, איז דער פאמיליע וועגווייזער נישט אוועקלעב אין דעם שפראך אין די יעצטיגע צייט. בעט דעם פראפעסיאנאל מיט וועמען איר ארבעט פאר היילן.</p>

## Languages Other Than English: For Professionals

The family guide is available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu and can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/FamilyResources/GuidesDocuments/default.htm#Preschool>. To obtain a copy in a certain language or to find out information on how to obtain an interpreter, call 212-374-7928.

# Welcome!

Dear Families,

As a lifelong educator, I know the importance of family involvement in a student's success. As your child's first teacher and advocate, you know your child best. We are delighted to partner with you to support your child's early learning and development, and we value what you know about your child and his or her strengths, needs, and interests. This Family Guide is a part of our ongoing efforts to make sure you have the information you need to be an active participant in your child's first and unique educational experience.

At the New York City Department of Education (DOE), we work to ensure that preschool students with disabilities have access to high-quality programs, services, and supports. We believe that when appropriate, special education can help to provide the foundation needed to maximize a child's potential as an independent and active learner as he or she enters Kindergarten.

This Family Guide describes the services and supports available to preschool children and will help you understand your rights as the parent of a child who has been referred or identified as having a disability. It also contains recommendations on how to best collaborate with your child's school and Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

In addition to reviewing this guide, I would also like to share our preschool special education webpage: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/AcrossGrades/Preschool/default.htm>

I encourage you to become familiar with the information in this guide and discuss it with your child's teachers, service providers, and CPSE administrator.

Thank you for your continued commitment to your young child's success and growth.

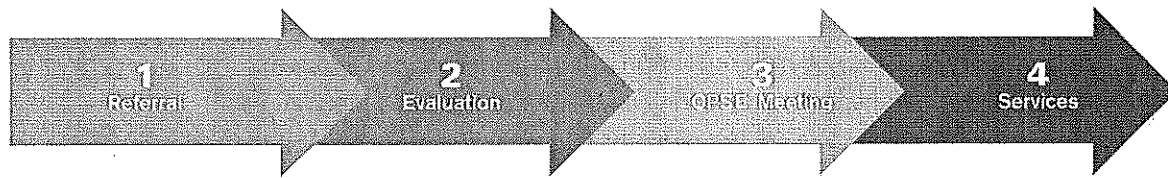
Sincerely,



Corinne Rello-Anselmi  
Deputy Chancellor, Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support

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# At a Glance

## Introduction

This Family Guide is intended to provide you—the family—with information about how the New York City Department of Education (DOE) determines if children ages 3 to 5 have a disability and how the DOE provides special education services to those children who are found eligible.

As described briefly below in the *Overview* and in more detail throughout this guide, this guide will tell you:

- What to look for if you think your child may require special education services;
- How to make a referral for an initial evaluation;
- How to participate in the evaluation and Individualized Education Program (IEP) development process; and
- How the DOE will arrange for services if your child is found eligible.

## Overview

Preschool special education services are available for children ages 3 to 5 with disabilities or delays in development that affect learning. These services are provided free of charge to eligible children.

If your child is showing delays in any of the following areas, he or she may be eligible for services:

- Cognitive (thinking and learning);
- Language and communication (understanding and using language);
- Adaptive (self-help skills such as toileting, eating, and dressing);
- Social-emotional (behaviors such as getting along with others and expressing feelings); and/or

- Motor development (physical development, including delays or disorders regarding vision, hearing, and movement).

Your child may also be eligible for services if he or she has a disability such as autism, deafness, deaf-blindness, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, or a visual impairment (including blindness). See page 15 for more information regarding eligibility for preschool special education.

You, the parent, can contact your Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) to request an evaluation to determine if your child is eligible for special education services. The CPSE is responsible for coordinating the special education process for children ages 3 to 5. There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city that work with families in the district where the family lives. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. See pages 36 and 37 for a CSE/CPSE map and contact information.

If your child is found eligible for preschool special education services, the CPSE will work with you to create an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is a plan that discusses your child's abilities and outlines the services that the New York City Department of Education (DOE) will provide free of charge to meet your child's educational needs. Depending on the IEP recommendation, the services may be delivered at your child's regular early childhood program, in a preschool special education program, or at another childcare location identified by you. To learn more about the different type of services, see page 21.

## Starting the Process

Every child is different. Some children have disabilities that are identified when they are born. Other children may have disabilities that are identified later or once they go to school. It is important to remember that children learn at different rates and in different ways.

How children ages 3 to 5 start the special education process will depend on whether:

- The child was identified before age 3 and received Early Intervention (EI) services;
- The child is attending a preschool program and his or her development is delayed in comparison with peers; or
- The child is in another childcare setting and you believe he or she may require special education services.



If you have concerns about your child's progress, the first step should be to talk to your child's teacher(s) to share and learn more about your child's needs and progress.

### Transitioning From Early Intervention (EI)

The Early Intervention (EI) program serves children from birth to age 3 who have disabilities or delays in development. EI is run by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

If your child is currently receiving EI services and you believe that he or she may need preschool special education services, you must refer your child to the New York City Department of Education (DOE). This is done by writing a referral letter to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). Your EI service coordinator can help you write the letter and instructions can be found on page 7.

EI services are scheduled to end on a child's 3rd birthday. At least six months before your child turns 3, your child's EI service coordinator should begin supporting you with the transition process.

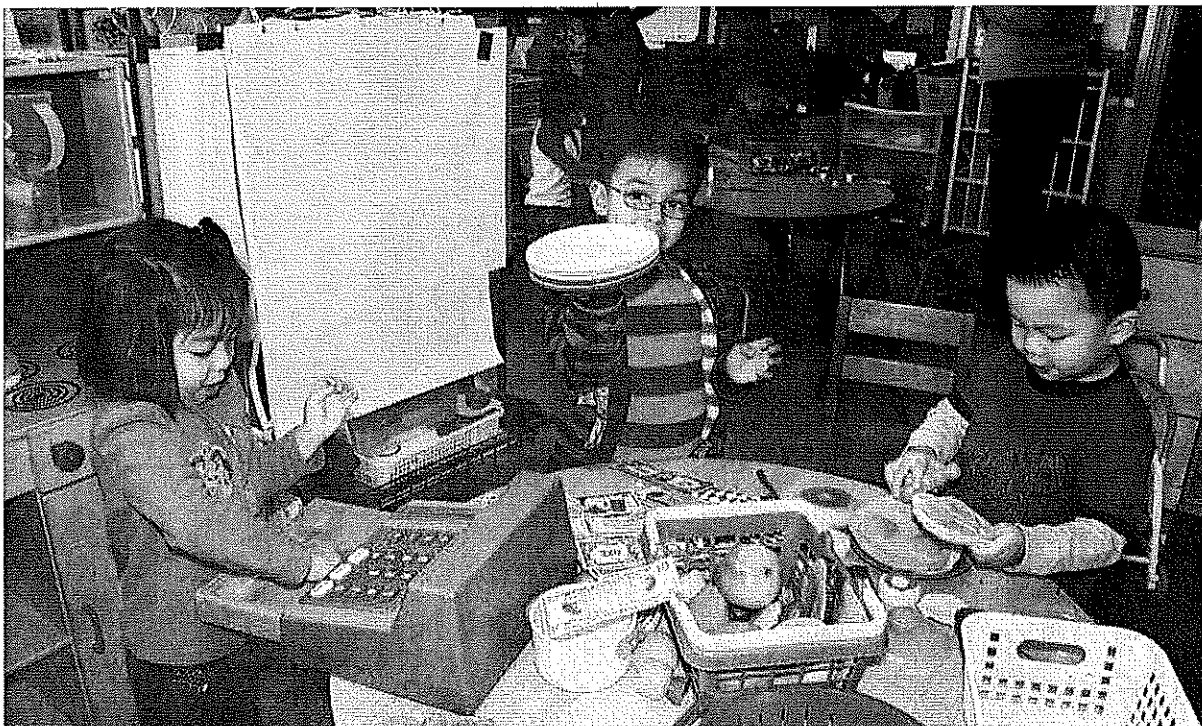
If the CPSE holds a meeting before your child's 3rd birthday and finds your child eligible for services, you can choose to:

- End EI services and begin preschool special education services at that time; or
- Extend your child's EI services depending on your child's birth date:

Born January 1 – August 31	Born September 1 – December 31
Your child can continue receiving EI services until August 31.	Your child can continue receiving EI services until December 31.

### If Your Child Is Already Enrolled in a Preschool Program

For children currently enrolled in preschool programs, families and preschool staff should explore different strategies to support a child before referring a child for special education services. Together, adults can collect information, use and monitor supports, and determine next steps for children.





If you have concerns about your child's progress, the first step should be to talk to your child's teacher(s) to share and learn more about your child's needs and progress. Schedule a conference with the teacher(s). To prepare for the conference, you can make a list of your concerns and questions that you would like to discuss. This includes any strategies that have been put in place at home or in the classroom to support your child. To help your child's teachers learn as much as possible about your child, it is important to:

- Share positive educational experiences, including when you have seen your child be successful, such as listening attentively to a story, sharing toys with friends, or waiting his or her turn.
- Give your thoughts about your child's strengths, challenges, and interests.
- Discuss any supports you may provide at home for your child to maintain positive behavior and/or promote learning.
- Explain areas in which you feel your child may need additional support.

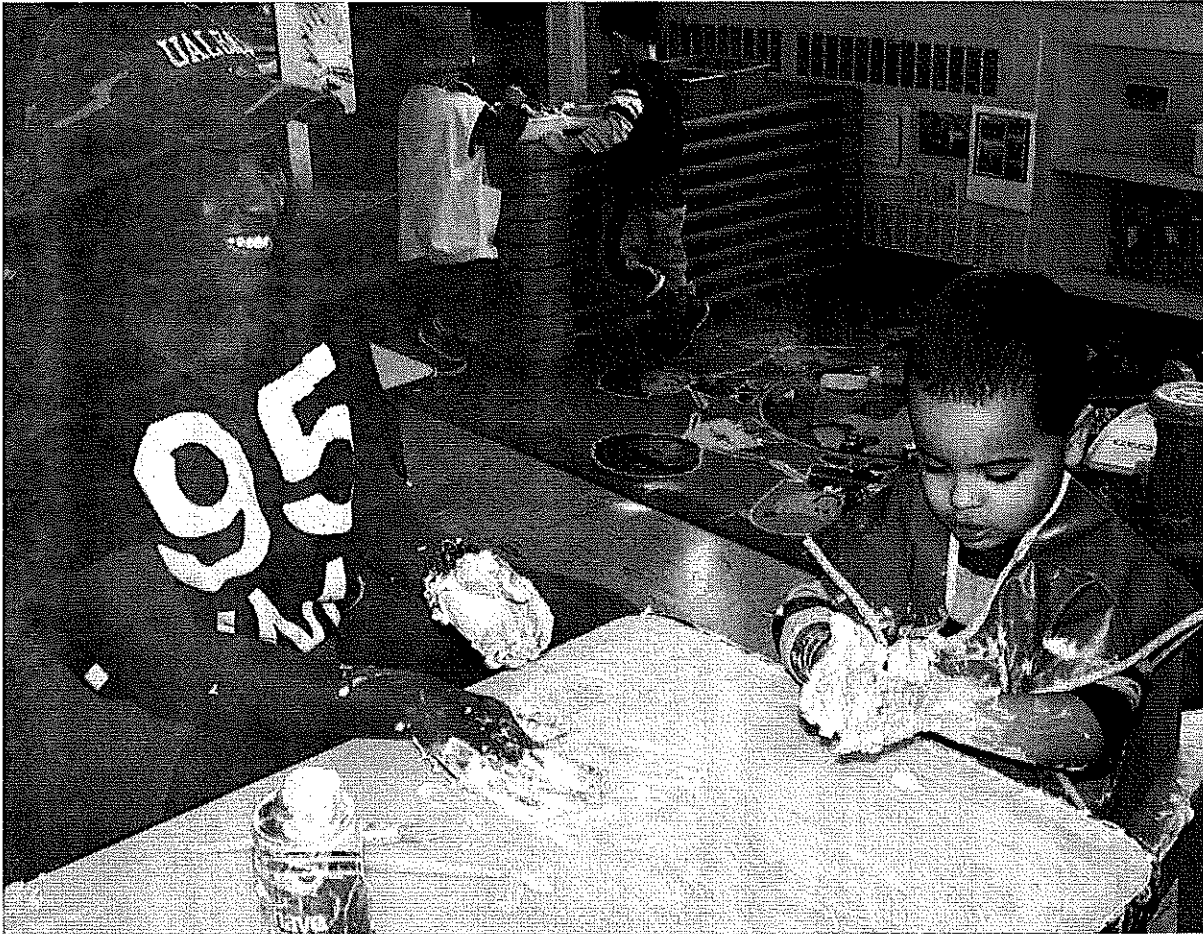
### **Questions to Ask**

To help you understand how to help your child grow and progress, you can ask your child's teacher(s):

- What are some of my child's strengths? What are some challenges for my child within the classroom?
- How do you (or will you) support my child when he or she needs help?
- Do you have some examples of my child's work that we can discuss together? How does this work compare with what he or she is expected to know or be able to do by the end of the year?
- Are there programs or services in the community that can support my child?
- What are some learning activities I can do at home or in the neighborhood?
- How does my child get along with the other children and adults in the classroom?
- Does my child have difficulty following directions? What do you do to help my child follow directions?
- What can you tell me (what have you noticed) about how my child learns and gets along with other children and adults in the classroom?
- Is my child learning and developing at a rate that is expected for his or her age?

If you continue to have concerns about your child's progress, you may refer your child to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) for a special education evaluation. You can make a referral for an evaluation at any time during the year by submitting a referral letter to your CPSE. See page 7 on how to write a referral letter.

As a parent or guardian, you know your child best. The CPSE will work with you to ensure your child receives appropriate services and supports.



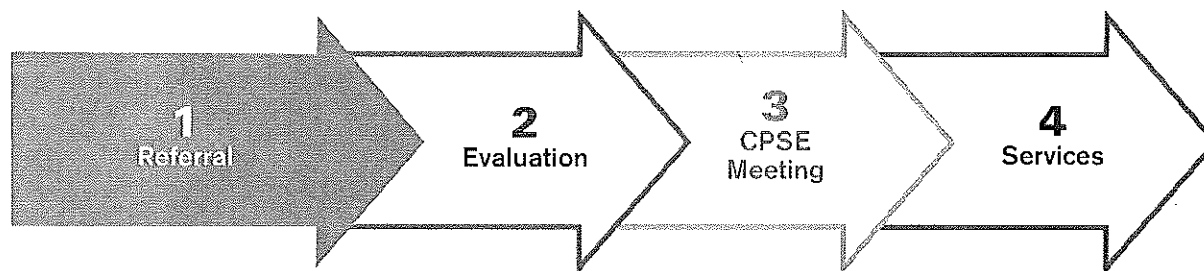
### **Children Whose Home Language Is Other Than English**

If your child's home language is other than English, preschool programs should support his or her learning in the classroom by building on your child's strengths in both languages. If the program has concerns regarding your child's progress despite supports, you may want to consider a referral to determine if special education services are needed.

### **If Your Child Is in Another Childcare Setting**

If your child is in another childcare setting—such as day care or in the care of a family member—you should collect information about your child's needs and skills at home and in his or her childcare setting to assist the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) in evaluating and understanding your child. Consider the questions and issues discussed in the above section. If you believe your child may have a disability and require special education services, you may refer your child to the CPSE for a special education evaluation. You can make a referral for an evaluation at any time during the year by submitting a referral letter to your CPSE. See page 7 on how to write a referral letter.

# The Preschool Special Education Process



## 1. REFERRAL

Prior to making a referral to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), families and teachers should work together to implement a variety of developmental and academic interventions to support the child. Please see page 5 for more information on working with teachers and asking the right questions before a referral.

### Age Eligibility

Children can begin receiving preschool special education services during the year in which they turn 3 years old. The exact date depends on your child's birth date.

Born January 1 – June 30	Born July 1 – December 31
Services can start on January 2 of the year the child turns 3.	Services can start on July 1 of the year the child turns 3.

Children can continue to receive services through June of the year in which they turn 5 years old (or August if recommended to receive Extended School Year services). Children become eligible for school-age special education services in the beginning of the school year in which they turn 5 years old.

### How to Make a Referral

If you are concerned about your child's development and you are interested in a preschool special education evaluation, you can write a letter to your local CPSE. This letter is called an "initial referral" and it must be made in writing. In the referral, you should:

- Say that you are requesting a preschool special education evaluation;
- Provide your child's full, legal name and date of birth;
- Describe any specific areas of concern about your child's development;
- List any services that your child has received in the past or is currently receiving;
- Provide your full contact information, including your name, an address, and a telephone number where the CPSE can reach you; and
- State your preferred language, if it isn't English.

If your child is currently receiving EI services, you can ask your EI service coordinator to help you write this letter. See page 4 for more information about transitioning from EI.

*continued on the next page*

You may provide the referral to your CPSE in person, by fax, or by mail. To find out which CPSE covers your child's home address and to get your CPSE office's contact information, you can:

- See CPSE information on page 36;
- Visit the CSE/CPSE's website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/Help/Contacts/CSECPSE>
- Call 311; or
- Visit the DOE's School Search website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch/>. Enter your child's home address at the top and click "Search." The website will give you the zoned school for your address. Look below the name of the school to see the school district where the school is located; that is your district. Each CPSE covers multiple school districts.

If you need support in writing or sending a referral letter, you can contact your CPSE or Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC). See page 36 and page 38 for contact information.

### **Who Can Make an Initial Referral in Addition to the Parent?**

In addition to the parent, a referral may also be made by a principal of a New York City Department of Education (DOE) school or a CPSE administrator.

If you are a foster parent, see page 25 for additional guidance.

### **Who Can Make a Request for Initial Referral?**

The referral process can also start if someone else submits a written request for initial referral to special education to the CPSE. A request to refer a student for special education can be made by:

- A professional staff member of the school district in which the student resides;
- A professional staff member of the public

or private school the student attends or is eligible to attend;

- A licensed physician;
- A judicial officer; or
- A professional staff member of a public agency with responsibility for welfare, health, or education of children.

When one of these individuals submits a request for initial referral, it is important that request:

- States the reasons for the request for referral and include any test results, records, or reports upon which the request for referral is based;
- Describes interventions used to remediate the child's performance prior to the request for referral; and
- Describes the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the request for referral.

Children can begin receiving preschool special education services during the year in which they turn 3 years old.

When the CPSE receives a request for a referral, the CPSE will, within 10 school days, either:

- Initiate the referral process and send you a referral packet (see below); or
- Provide you with a copy of the request for referral, inform you of your right to refer your child for an initial evaluation, and offer you the opportunity to meet.

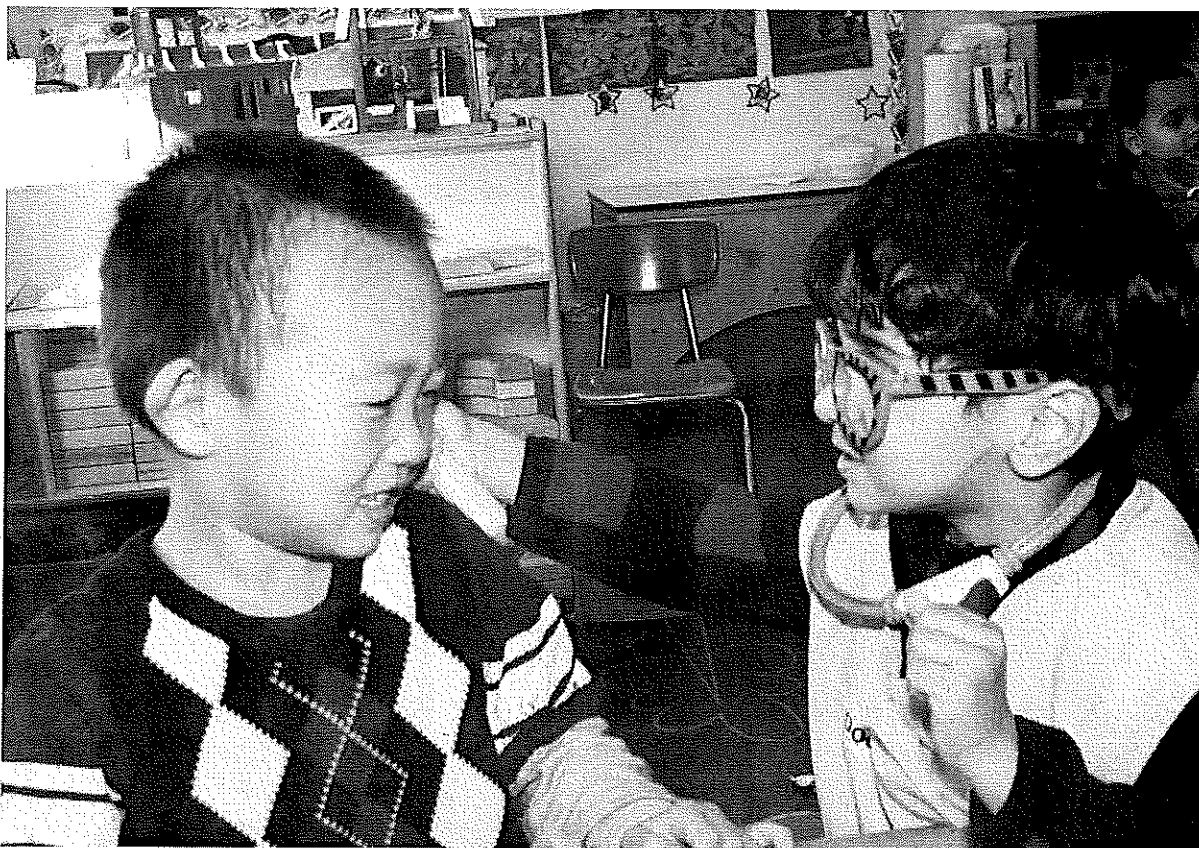
### **Referral Packet**

Once an initial referral has been made, the CPSE will mail you a referral packet for preschool special education services, which includes:

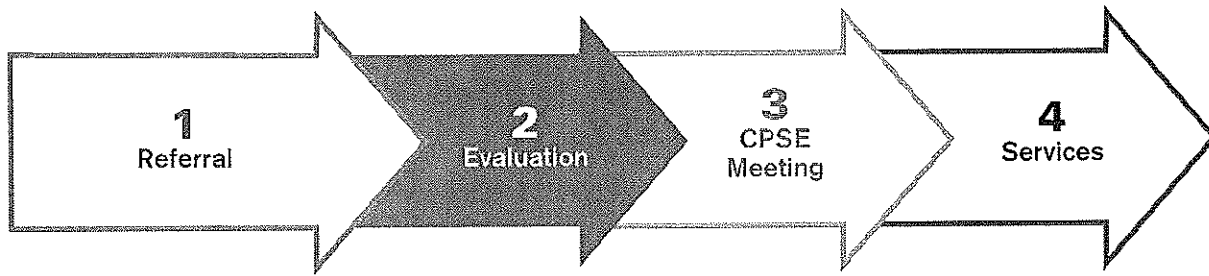
- A notice that the referral was received;

- A list of evaluation sites approved by the New York State Education Department ("approved evaluation sites");
- A "consent for initial evaluation" form;
- A Child and Adolescent Health Examination form; and
- Information about your rights.

If you do not receive a referral packet within two weeks after sending the referral, you should call the CPSE for help. Once you receive the packet, you should schedule an evaluation with one of the approved evaluation sites included in the referral packet.



If you are concerned about your child's development and you are interested in a preschool special education evaluation, you can write a letter to your local CPSE.



## 2. EVALUATION

### The Evaluation Process

As described in more detail below, when you receive the referral packet, you should select an approved evaluation site from the list provided and contact that evaluation agency. The evaluation agency you contact will:

- Schedule a meeting with you to explain the evaluation process and your due process rights, and obtain written consent to evaluate your child;
- Notify the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) that they obtained consent to evaluate your child;

- Conduct appropriate evaluations; and
- Complete the Preschool Student Evaluation Summary Report, which summarizes the results of the assessments conducted.

The evaluations will be done at no cost to you.

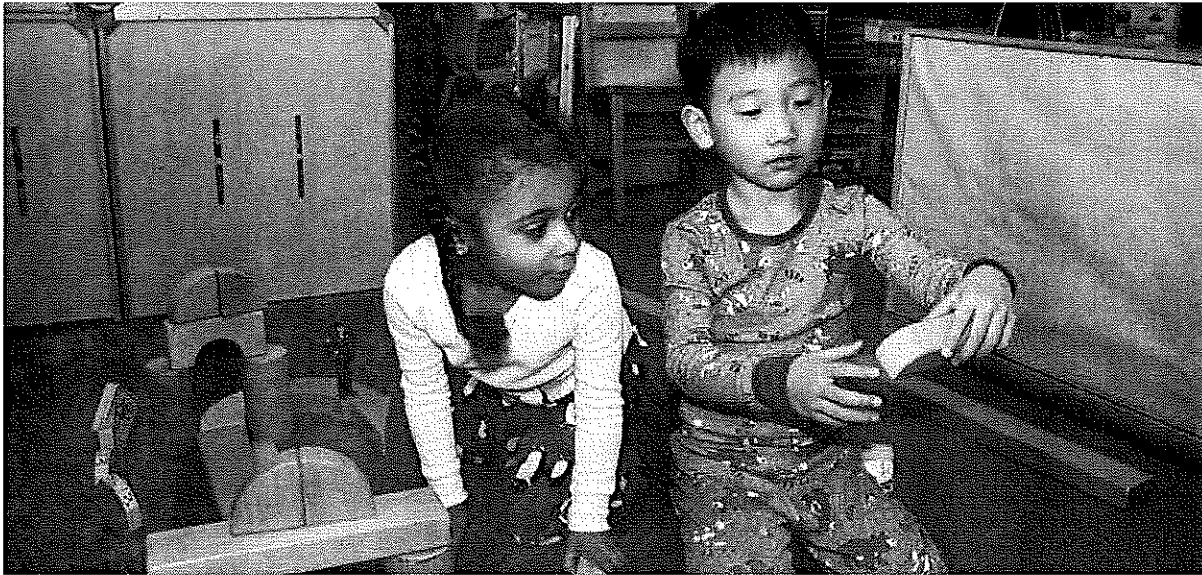
Your referral packet contains a list of evaluation agencies that are approved by New York State to offer preschool evaluations.

### How to Arrange an Evaluation

Your referral packet contains a list of evaluation agencies that are approved by New York State to offer preschool evaluations. You should review the list of approved agencies and choose an agency from that list. While most of the evaluation sites are private agencies, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) also has preschool evaluators in Committee on Special Education (CSE) offices. When choosing who will evaluate your child, you should ask how quickly the evaluations can be conducted. This information will support the timely arrangement of a CPSE meeting after evaluations are complete. Once you have chosen an agency, you should schedule an appointment as soon as possible.

Some children require a **bilingual evaluation**, which is conducted in both English and the child's home or native language. Agencies that offer bilingual evaluations are identified on the evaluation agency list in your referral packet, along with the specific languages (other than English) that they offer. You can also contact your CPSE or Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC) to help you find an agency that can do a bilingual evaluation. To help determine if your child needs a bilingual evaluation, evaluation agencies will give your child a home language survey to determine the language of assessment.

If you would like help with choosing an evaluation site, you may contact your CPSE or ECDC. See page 36 and page 38 for contact information.



### **Providing Your Informed Consent to Evaluate Your Child**

You must give permission in writing before the evaluation agency can evaluate your child. This is called “informed consent.” Informed consent means that the agency has fully informed you, in your preferred language, of relevant information regarding the evaluation and your rights. Your consent must be voluntary and in writing and can be revoked (taken back) at any time. If you, as a parent, do not consent to evaluations, special education evaluations cannot begin, and the CPSE will notify you that the case has been closed and no further action will be taken.

By consenting to evaluations, you are not consenting to special education services. You can have your child evaluated and choose not to have your child receive special education services (if eligible).

You have the right to end the evaluation process at any time by writing to the CPSE and informing them that you wish to revoke your consent to evaluate your child. Once you choose to stop the evaluation, your child’s CPSE case will be closed automatically. However, if at any time you revoke consent, that revocation is not retroactive, meaning that it does not negate an action taken before the consent was revoked.

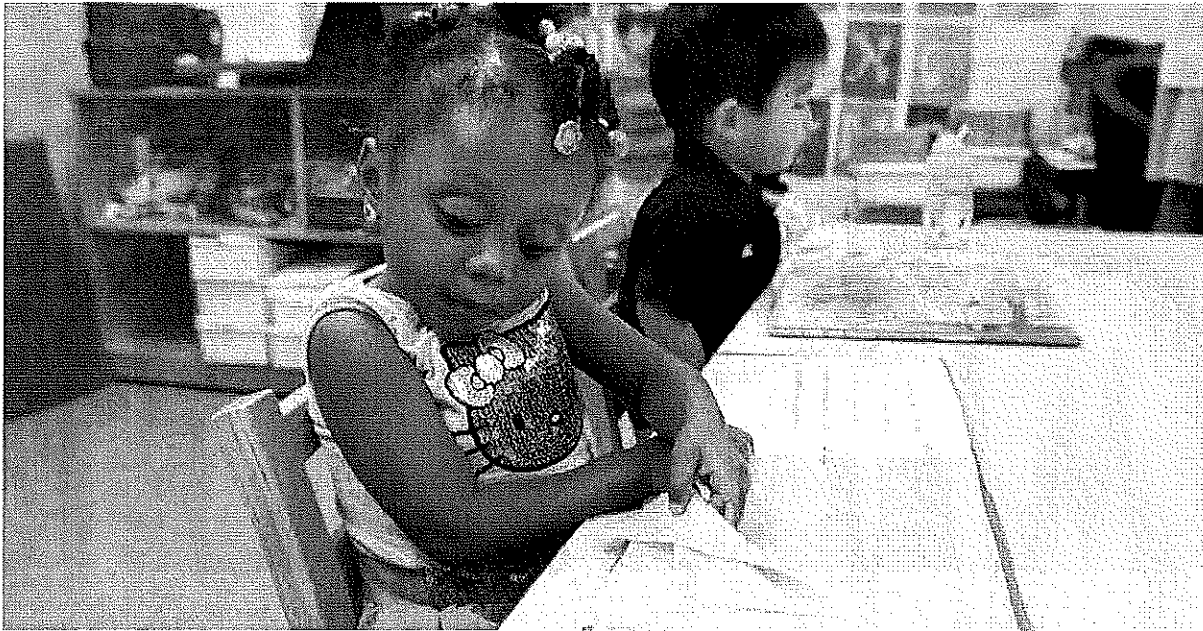
If you are a foster parent, see page 25 for additional guidance.

When providing your consent, keep in mind that the CPSE must hold a CPSE meeting within 60 calendar days from the date you sign the consent form. Because this timeline does not start until you sign the consent form, it is important to schedule your first evaluation appointment as soon as possible. This will also help to ensure that the CPSE has enough time to arrange for services to begin promptly (no later than 30 school days from the date of the CPSE meeting and within 60 school days of the date you sign the consent to evaluate, or by the first day of age eligibility for preschool special education services).

### **What Will the Initial Evaluation Include?**

Your child’s initial evaluation will consist of:

- A comprehensive psychological evaluation that looks at what your child knows and at his or her cognitive abilities;
- A social history interview, which provides background on your child’s developmental and family history, often from birth to present;
- A physical evaluation, which is a health examination form often completed by a child’s doctor;



- An observation of your child in his or her current educational setting or childcare location; and
- Other appropriate assessments as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral, and emotional factors that contribute to the child's suspected disability.

### **Private Evaluations**

The CPSE must consider all information about your child, including information you provide. While the evaluation agency you choose will conduct any necessary tests and assessments, you can provide the CPSE with any private evaluations conducted at your own expense. If you have evaluations from a private doctor or evaluator that you would like the CPSE to review, you should share them with the evaluation agency and send them to your CPSE administrator. If your child receives Early

Intervention (EI) services, your EI service coordinator should, with your permission, send EI evaluations and records to the CPSE. The CPSE will sometimes accept private evaluations or recent EI evaluations instead of having an evaluation agency conduct new evaluations. Other times, those private or EI evaluations will be considered by the CPSE but will not replace new evaluations. In either case, the CPSE will consider any material you provide.

### **Evaluation Summary**

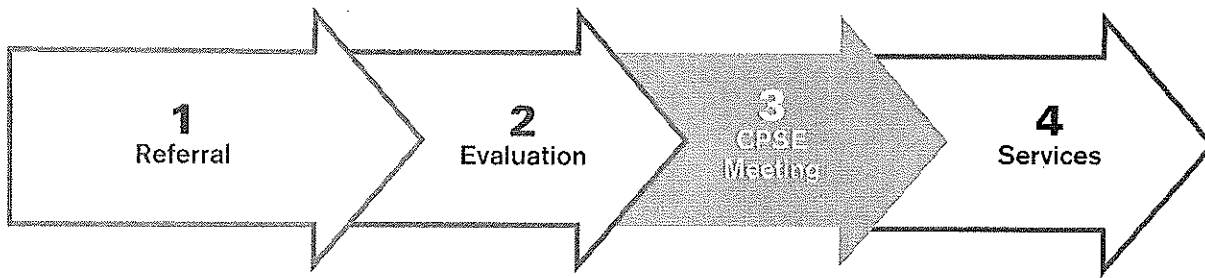
The evaluation site will share a copy of evaluation reports, including the Preschool Student Evaluation Summary Report, with you, the parent. Copies will also be sent to the CPSE administrator.

Upon receipt of the evaluation reports and summary, a meeting will be scheduled with you and the CPSE to review the evaluations.

### **Sharing Student Information Updates**

If at any point your child's information changes, including your child's address, name, guardian, or guardian's phone number, it is important to update your CPSE and preschool program. This will help to ensure you receive notifications and supports regarding your child.





### 3. CPSE MEETING

#### Overview

Once your child's initial evaluation is completed, you will be invited to attend a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting at a mutually agreeable time. It is very important that you, the parent, attend CPSE meetings so that you can share information and ideas and work together with the CPSE as a team to make decisions about your child.

The initial CPSE meeting will occur within 60 calendar days of the date you (the parent) signed the form consenting to your child's evaluation. You should receive a written invitation to a CPSE meeting at least five days prior to the meeting

with information about the time, date, and location of the meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, you should contact the CPSE to ask to change the date.

At a CPSE meeting, the team will review the evaluation results, share and learn more about your child, and determine if your child is eligible for preschool special education services. See page 15 for more information on eligibility criteria.

If found eligible, the CPSE will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Learn more about IEPs on page 18. Your CPSE will arrange for all the services and programs on the IEP to be provided, free of cost to you.



After your child has been identified as a preschool student with a disability, your child's IEP will be reviewed at least once per year in additional CPSE meetings. These are called "Annual Reviews." See page 19 for more information on Annual Reviews. Additionally, your child may be referred for a Reevaluation. See page 20 for more information on Reevaluations.

The sections below go into more detail on preparing for CPSE meetings.

### **Preparing for a CPSE Meeting**

Before a CPSE meeting, you may want to take some of the following steps to be prepared and participate most effectively:

- Review the evaluation results. The approved evaluation site will send you the evaluations and the evaluation summary and may also review the results of the evaluation prior to a CPSE meeting. Consider which parts of the evaluations you think are the most important and which parts you have questions about.
- Gather information and documents from people who know your child, such as teachers, providers, or doctors who may be helpful in explaining your child's needs.
- Review the eligibility criteria for preschool children found on page 15.
- Be prepared to discuss your child's strengths and needs, and how they affect his or her academic, social, emotional, and physical development.

- Review the programs and services that may be offered for preschool children (page 21).
- Think about people who should attend the meeting and arrange for them to come with you or join by phone. If your child is in a program, make sure his or her teacher is planning to participate.
- If English is not your preferred language, request for your CPSE to arrange an interpreter at least 72 hours in advance of a CPSE meeting.

### **CPSE Meeting Participants**

You, the parent, are a *very important* member of the CPSE team. Other participants may include:

- A general education teacher for initial CPSE meetings and whenever the child is or may be in general education;
- A special education teacher and/or provider (if applicable);
- A district representative (CPSE administrator);
- Others with knowledge about your child or special expertise;
- Early Intervention (EI) service coordinator, at your request; and
- An additional parent member, if you request this in writing 72 hours in advance of the meeting. A parent member is a parent of a child with a disability in the school district who participates in IEP meetings and assists a parent of a child with a known or suspected disability in making educational decisions for his or her child.

At a CPSE meeting, the team will review the evaluation results, share and learn more about your child, and determine if your child is eligible for preschool special education services.

## Your Role at a CPSE Meeting

At a CPSE meeting, you can participate in decisions that will be made about your child's eligibility for special education services and programs. You know your child best and can speak about his or her strengths, interests, and needs. And, as the parent, you can talk about your thoughts and ideas about how best to educate and support your child.

At a CPSE meeting, you should:

- Offer insight into things about your child, such as how your child learns or his or her interests;
- Report on whether the skills your child is learning are being used at home; and
- If your child is eligible, work with the rest of the team to develop the IEP.

## Questions to Ask at a CPSE Meeting

- What can I do at home to support my child's development and progress toward IEP goals?
- How does my child learn best? How could the preschool program use my child's strengths while teaching him or her?
- How frequently is my child's progress towards his or her IEP goals monitored? What are the best ways for me to stay in touch with my child's preschool program to be informed of academic or behavioral progress?
- How will I know if my child is making progress towards his or her IEP goals?
- What services and supports will best meet my child's needs? How can these be arranged?
- How does or could the preschool program address my child's learning and behavioral needs?

## Eligibility

A preschool child will be found eligible for special education services if there is a significant delay when compared with accepted developmental milestones in one or more functional areas:

- Cognitive (thinking and learning);
- Language and communication (understanding and using language);
- Adaptive (self-help skills such as toileting, eating, and dressing);
- Social-emotional (behaviors such as getting along with others and expressing feelings); and/or

- Motor development (physical development, including delays or disorders regarding vision, hearing, and movement).

A preschool child will also be found eligible for special education services if he or she:

- Meets the criteria of one of the following disabilities (described more below):
  - Autism
  - Deafness
  - Deaf-Blindness
  - Hearing Impairment
  - Orthopedic Impairment
  - Other Health Impairment
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Visual Impairment

AND

- Requires approved preschool special education services and programs.

Diversity in culture and language does not determine a child's eligibility for preschool special education services. The CPSE will consider these differences when evaluating skills and behaviors.

If your child is found eligible, the disability classification on the IEP will be listed as **"Preschool Student with a Disability."**

If the CPSE reviews the evaluations and determines that your child is not eligible for preschool special education services, the CPSE will provide you with information regarding why your child is ineligible, and the case will be closed. If you disagree with the CPSE's decision that your child is not eligible for services, you may use your due process rights (see page 28) to resolve the disagreement.

### *Autism*

A developmental disability, significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a



student's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the student has an emotional disturbance.

### *Deafness*

A student with a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects the student's educational performance.

### *Deaf-Blindness*

A student with both hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness.

### *Hearing Impairment*

An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects the student's educational performance but is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

### *Orthopedic Impairment*

A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputation, fractures, or burns that cause contractures).

### *Other Health Impairment*

A student with limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems, including but not limited to a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever,



nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or Tourette syndrome, which adversely affects that student's educational performance.

#### *Traumatic Brain Injury*

A student with an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, and anoxia or brain tumors with resulting impairments that adversely affect that student's educational performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries or brain injuries from

certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate, or severe impairments in one or more areas, including cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing, and speech. The term does not include injuries that are congenital or caused by birth trauma.

#### *Visual Impairment*

An impairment in vision including blindness that, even with correction, adversely affects that student's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

## The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

If your child meets the eligibility criteria (found starting on page 15), the team will work with you at a CPSE meeting to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The IEP describes a child's strengths and needs, and how to meet his or her needs. It will document your child's current skills and abilities, establish educational and developmental goals, and determine what special education supports and services are appropriate for him or her.

The IEP will include the following sections:

- **Present Levels of Performance:** This information details how your child is currently developing, how the disability affects his or her performance in age-appropriate activities, and (if applicable) how your child is performing in school. Information can come from evaluation findings and results, authentic assessments (such as classroom work samples, videos, and photographs), observations of your child, and information provided by parents, caregivers, teachers, service providers, and other school staff.
- **Measurable Annual Goals:** The CPSE team will create goals that are designed to meet your child's needs and to support him or her in making progress in the general curriculum. The goals will be designed to reflect what your child is reasonably expected to be able to achieve during one school year. The goals can be academic, address social or behavioral needs, relate to physical needs, or address other educational needs. While your child is a preschool student, each annual goal will

contain short-term objectives or benchmarks that are the measurable immediate steps leading from your child's present level of performance to meeting his or her annual goal. You, as a parent and member of the team, should provide information about your child to help the team understand your child's needs and should actively participate in the creation of the goals.

- **Recommended Special Education Programs and Services:** The IEP will list the special education program, related services, supplementary aid and services, and assistive technology devices to be provided to your child. This section will also indicate whether or not your child is eligible to receive special transportation and services for an extended school year (during July and August). To learn more about programs and services, see page 21.
- **Accommodations and Modifications:** Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessments that allow students with disabilities to participate in the classroom on an equal basis with peers without disabilities. Examples include adding visual cues (charts, pictures, color coding) or providing supports for transitions (instruction and practice, visual and verbal cues, organization of materials, songs).

The CPSE will provide you with a copy of your child's IEP. You will also be provided with a Notice of Recommendation, which will inform

If your child meets the eligibility criteria (found on page 15), the team will work with you at a CPSE meeting to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).



you in writing of the services and programs recommended in your child's IEP.

### **Annual and Requested Review CPSE Meetings**

While your child is receiving preschool special education services, his or her IEP will be reviewed at least once every year. This review is called the "annual review." Your CPSE administrator will contact you to schedule the annual review meeting. At the meeting, the team will discuss your child's progress and determine whether your child's program or services should be continued, modified, or discontinued. If the CPSE determines that your child is no longer eligible for special education services, it will "declassify" your child. Please see **Declassification** on page 26.

The purpose of the annual review is to:

- Review all aspects of the current IEP to determine what goals were met during the current school year;
- Consider any new information about the child's educational needs; and
- If the student continues to need special education supports, write a new IEP that considers readiness for increased access to LRE and describes all aspects of the program for the coming school year.

In addition to this annual review, you may ask for an additional CPSE meeting. This is often called a "requested review." You may want to request an additional CPSE meeting if you feel that your child has made significant progress and some or all of the special education services are no longer necessary or should be changed. You may also want to request an additional CPSE meeting if you feel that your child is not making adequate progress with the current services. To request an additional CPSE meeting, you should submit a letter to your CPSE administrator explaining your reasons for requesting the additional CPSE meeting. If you are requesting an additional CPSE meeting, you should also

The IEP will be targeted to provide for the **least restrictive environment (LRE)** that is appropriate to meet your child's needs. This means that your child will receive his or her programs and services in a setting with nondisabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. The team will first consider whether your child's needs can be met in a general education setting. Other settings, such as a special class in an integrated setting or special class, are considered only if your child would not be able to make meaningful progress in a general education class, even with the help of supports and services. LRE also considers the intensity of support provided with related services and paraprofessional recommendations.

provide the CPSE with new or additional documentation or private evaluations that you would like considered at the CPSE meeting.

- ☒ Whenever the CPSE is considering declassifying your child. See page 26 for more information about declassification.

After you participate in the annual or requested review CPSE meeting with the team, the CPSE administrator will provide you with the IEP and notify you in writing of the recommended special education services.

With your input, before a reevaluation, the CPSE administrator will review current data about your child and determine what new assessments will be done. The CPSE administrator will provide you with written notice of the assessments and will request your informed written consent to evaluate your child. Once you have provided your consent to evaluate, you will choose an evaluation site from the list of New York State Department of Education approved providers, which will conduct the assessments recommended by the CPSE administrator.

### **Reevaluation**

After your child has been identified as a preschool student with a disability, you can request that your child be reevaluated at any time. This is called a "reevaluation." The CPSE will arrange for a reevaluation as long as it does not occur more frequently than once a year, unless you and the CPSE both agree *in writing*. To request a reevaluation, you should submit a letter to your CPSE administrator explaining why your child needs a new evaluation.

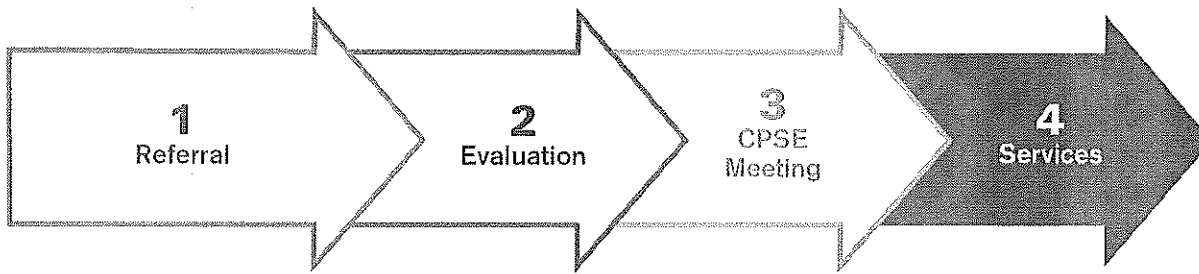
After the reevaluation is complete, the CPSE administrator will schedule a meeting to discuss the results of the reevaluation and develop a new IEP. Following the reevaluation CPSE meeting, the CPSE administrator will provide you with the IEP and notify you in writing of the recommended special education services. The CPSE will hold this meeting and arrange for the programs and services on the IEP to be provided within 60 days of the request for reevaluation.

The CPSE will also arrange for an appropriate reevaluation:

- ☒ If the CPSE determines that your child's needs, including educational and functional needs, call for a reevaluation; or

While your child is receiving preschool special education services, his or her IEP will be reviewed at least once every year. This review is called the "annual review."





## 4. SERVICES

### Overview

There is a range of education and related services available to support preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Preschool special education services fall along a continuum from less restrictive to more restrictive. Less restrictive programs allow

children to receive services alongside students without IEPs. More restrictive programs are available to children who require more specialized supports and services. The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will always consider your child's least restrictive environment (LRE). To read more about LRE, see the box on page 20.

Programs and Services	Description
<b>Related Services</b>	Related services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, counseling, orientation and mobility services, hearing, and health services. Related services support academic goals.
<b>Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT)</b>	A SEIT is a special education teacher who works closely with a student on academic, emotional, and social skills. This service can be delivered in small groups or one-on-one at your child's regular early childhood program, at another childcare location identified by you, or at your family's home in certain situations.
<b>Special Class in an Integrated Setting (Half and Full Day) (SCIS)</b>	This is a classroom in which students with and without IEPs are educated together. A SCIS class includes a special education teacher and classroom paraprofessional. Staff members work together throughout the day to adapt and modify instruction for students with IEPs to ensure the entire class has access to the general education curriculum.
<b>Special Class (Half and Full Day)</b>	This is a classroom that only serves students with IEPs whose needs cannot be met within the general education setting or SCIS classroom. Students in a special class have similar levels of academic and learning characteristics, social development, physical development, and/or management needs. Special classes are led by a special education teacher and often have one or more paraprofessionals. There are generally 6–12 students in a special class.
<b>Residential Placement</b>	A residential placement is a special education program provided for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week by a state-approved program at a site where children receive care 24 hours per day. This program is for children whose needs require 24-hour attention.

## **Additional Supports and Services**

There are a number of other supports and services that an IEP can recommend in addition to the programs described below.

A **paraprofessional** is an aide who works with a student with an IEP one-on-one or in a small group. Paraprofessionals support management needs, including needs relating to a student's behavior and health.

An **Assistive Technology (AT) Device** is any piece of equipment, product, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability (e.g., a communication device, FM unit, computer access). If your child is found by the CPSE to require any Assistive Technology device, it will be listed on his or her IEP. To learn more about Assistive Technology, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/Special Education/SupportsServices/Assistive Technology.htm>.

**Bilingual Services** are available for some children who speak languages other than English. If a child is recommended for a special class, the IEP can state that a child needs a bilingual class. Or, if a child is recommended for speech therapy, the IEP can state that a child needs to receive speech therapy from a bilingual provider.

**Transportation** may be available if your child's IEP recommends a special class or special class in an integrated setting at a preschool special education program. If so, then your child's CPSE and school will arrange for transportation.

If your child's IEP recommends SEIT and/or related services, and those services are provided at your child's preschool, childcare program, or home, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) will not provide

transportation. For more information on transportation reimbursement for preschool services, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/Special Education/Supports Services/Related Services/default.htm> and scroll to the bottom of the page.

**Behavioral supports** are available to help preschool children whose behavior interferes with their learning. For example, your child may be acting in a way that poses a risk of harm to him or her or to others. These behaviors may be due to a disability or to delays in social or emotional development. Children can receive behavioral supports on their IEP that allow them to participate safely and productively in a classroom setting.

When a child's behavior interferes with learning, the evaluation agency should conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to identify why a child engages in that behavior and how the child's behavior relates to the environment. If you have concerns about your child's behavior, you should mention it in your referral letter to the CPSE (page 7), and, when you meet with the evaluation agency, you should ask the agency to conduct an FBA. At a CPSE meeting, the team can then use the FBA to create a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). The BIP describes the strategies that will be used to help the child replace challenging behavior with more appropriate behavior.

In addition to a BIP, many of the programs and services discussed above can address behavioral concerns.

**Extended School Year Services** are recommended for some students who require services during July and August in order to prevent substantial regression in their development levels. A child will experience "substantial regression" if he or she will require an unreasonable amount of time at the beginning of the school year to reestablish IEP goals and

objectives that the child had mastered at the end of the previous school year. Only if the CPSE determines that your child is likely to experience substantial regression if your child does not receive extended school year services will the CPSE recommend these services on the IEP. If so, the CPSE will include a statement that explains the reasons for this recommendation. Parents must consent to children receiving extended school year services.

### **Arranging Services**

After the IEP is developed, the CPSE will ask you, the parent, for written permission to start services. This is called "informed consent" for services. If you as a parent do not respond to this request for consent or if you deny consent, the CPSE will not arrange for any services to be provided, and no further action will be taken. If you are a foster parent, see page 25 for additional guidance.

The DOE is responsible for arranging all programs and services on the initial IEP. Services should begin:

- On the first day of age eligibility for preschool special education services; or
- No later than 60 school days from the date the parent signed the "consent for initial evaluation" form or 30 school days from the date of the initial CPSE meeting, whichever is first.

The projected start date for services will be listed on the IEP.

If you have any concerns or questions about the arrangement of programs and services, please contact your CPSE administrator. To read a document on arranging preschool related services, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/FamilyResources/GuidesDocuments/default.htm> (found under "Preschool" and "Related Services").



## Program and Service Locations

Program and service locations are based on a child's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) recommendation and age. To find your child's IEP recommendation, refer to the "Recommended Special Education Programs and Services" section of his or her IEP.

### Children With IEPs That Recommend Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) and/or Related Services

- If your child is 4 years old, he or she can receive services at a free New York City Department of Education (DOE) Pre-K for All general education program, and you should apply through the DOE's admission process found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Choices/Enrollment/PreK/default.htm>.
- If your child is 3 or 4 years old, he or she can receive services at a regular early childhood pre-K or childcare program, at your family's home, or at another childcare location identified by you, the parent, based on your child's needs.

### Children With IEPs That Recommend a Special Class or Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS)

- The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will arrange for an appropriate placement in a preschool special education program. For CSE/CPSE contact information, see page 36.

### Limited Mobility and Accessibility Needs

For the purpose of school accessibility, a student with limited mobility is one who utilizes a mobility device—such as a wheelchair, walker, crutches, or cane—to negotiate the environment,

or any student who negotiates the school environment with difficulty and/or at a slower pace than his or her peers, whether it is due to muscle weakness, lack of endurance, or any other reason.

If your child is recommended for SEIT and/or related services, you, the parent, should contact programs directly to learn about site accessibility.

If your child is recommended for special class or special class in an integrated setting, the CPSE will ensure accessibility needs are met when arranging that placement.



## Parental Rights

### Foster Care

Unless their rights have been terminated, surrendered, or limited, a child's birth or adoptive parents have sole authority to make special education decisions for their child. When a child is in foster care and the child's birth parents cannot be located after reasonable efforts, the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) administrator will determine who the "parent" is. The foster parent of a child in foster care may assume the role of parent when the birth parents' rights have been terminated or surrendered, a judge has limited the birth parents' rights to make educational decisions, or the parents are deceased. When the child

has a foster parent in these circumstances, the foster parent does not need to be assigned as the student's surrogate parent because he or she already meets the definition of "parent" for special education purposes. If you are a foster parent and you want to know if you have educational decision-making rights, contact the child's foster care agency caseworker to learn more about the child's legal status and the parent's rights. You can also contact the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Office of Education Support and Policy Planning by phone at 212-453-9918 or by email at [education.unit@acs.nyc.gov](mailto:education.unit@acs.nyc.gov).





### **Students in Temporary Housing**

Students living in a homeless shelter or other temporary housing arrangements have certain rights, including access to the same public education and services that are available to permanently housed students. The New York City Department of Education (DOE)'s Students in Temporary Housing Unit is available to answer questions and provide support on the rights of students residing in temporary housing situations. Contact Marygrace Ponzio by phone at 718-391-6845 or by email at [MPonzio@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MPonzio@schools.nyc.gov).

If your address or contact information changes throughout the year, please inform the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). For CSE/CPSE contact information, see page 36.

### **Ending Preschool Special Education Services**

#### *Withdrawing Consent*

You can withdraw your consent for preschool special education services for your child at any time. This is also known as "Revocation of Consent." The request must be in writing and given to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). When you withdraw consent:

- The CPSE must send you a notice that all special education services will terminate in your preferred language within 10 calendar days of the date that the notice was sent to you.
- Your child will no longer receive any special education services. This includes specialized transportation, assistive technology, and program modifications.

After withdrawing consent, you have the right to change your mind. If you want your child to be reevaluated for preschool special education services, you must write a new referral letter to the CPSE.

#### *Declassification*

It is also possible that the CPSE may determine that a child is no longer eligible for special education services. If so, the CPSE will "declassify" the child. Before doing this, the CPSE will conduct a reevaluation and hold a CPSE meeting to determine if the child continues to be eligible for preschool special education services. A decision to declassify a child will be made based on a determination that the child no longer demonstrates delays or impairments that make him or her eligible for preschool special education. If you disagree with

a decision to terminate your child's services, you can utilize your due process rights. Please see page 28 for more information on your due process rights.

## **Records**

**Access to Records:** The evaluation site should provide you with a copy of any evaluations or reports that will be considered before a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting

## **Due Process Rights**

Your participation in the development, review, and revision of your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) is essential. As a parent, you have the right and responsibility to make sure you fully understand what is in your child's IEP. If you do not agree with the recommendation at the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting, you have the right to challenge the decisions about your child's eligibility, evaluation, services, and placement.

You have the following rights:

- **The Right to Be Fully Informed:** You must be adequately notified, in your preferred language or mode of communication, of your rights in the educational decision-making process. There are instances described in this Family Guide when you will be asked to provide your consent. Providing consent means that you have been fully informed in your preferred language of all information about the action for which you are giving consent, that you understand and agree in writing to that action and that the notification includes what, if any, records will be released and to whom. This right also means that you understand that the consent is voluntary on your part and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Please understand that your withdrawal of consent does not undo an action that has occurred after you gave your consent and before you withdrew it.
- **The Right to Participate:** You have the right to participate at CPSE meetings. This includes your right to bring other individuals who know your child or who have professional knowledge to meetings. Meetings to discuss the service recommendations for your child must be scheduled with you at a mutually convenient time. If you require an interpreter, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) will arrange for one with at least 72 hours' notice to the CPSE.
- **The Right to Challenge:** You have the right to challenge CPSE decisions about your child. You can request Mediation or an Impartial Hearing to challenge any decisions that affect your child's education or to resolve differences. If you require an interpreter to participate in Mediation or an Impartial Hearing, the DOE will arrange for one. For more information on your right to challenge, see Due Process Rights, beginning on page 28.
- **The Right to Have an Additional Parent Member at a CPSE Meeting (in certain circumstances):** You have the right to request an additional parent member of a student with a disability to attend a CPSE meeting by making that request at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. See page 14 for a definition of additional parent member.

for your child. Additionally, you have the right to request copies of any evaluations or reports that have been written and placed in your child's file. This can be done by making a request to the CPSE.

Your CPSE administrator will provide a copy of your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) after a CPSE meeting. You can also request a copy at any time.

Parents may disagree with statements in their child's record, such as what is included on evaluations, reports, or the IEP. If this is the case, you can request, in writing, to meet with the CPSE to discuss the area(s) of disagreement. The CPSE may decide to amend portions of the record because they are inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of the student's rights of privacy. You will be informed of any changes to your child's record. If the CPSE does not agree to remove the portions that you questioned and your concerns have not been addressed to your satisfaction, you may write a letter to the CSE Chairperson stating:

- the information you believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of your child's rights;
- the records in which you believe that information to be contained;
- the reason you believe the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of your child's rights; and
- your proposed change to the records.

The CPSE will place this letter in your child's file and may make a determination to modify or expunge the entry from the record if warranted. You may also file an appeal to the Superintendent under Chancellor's Regulation A-820, "Confidentiality and Release of Student Records; Records Retention."

## Due Process Rights

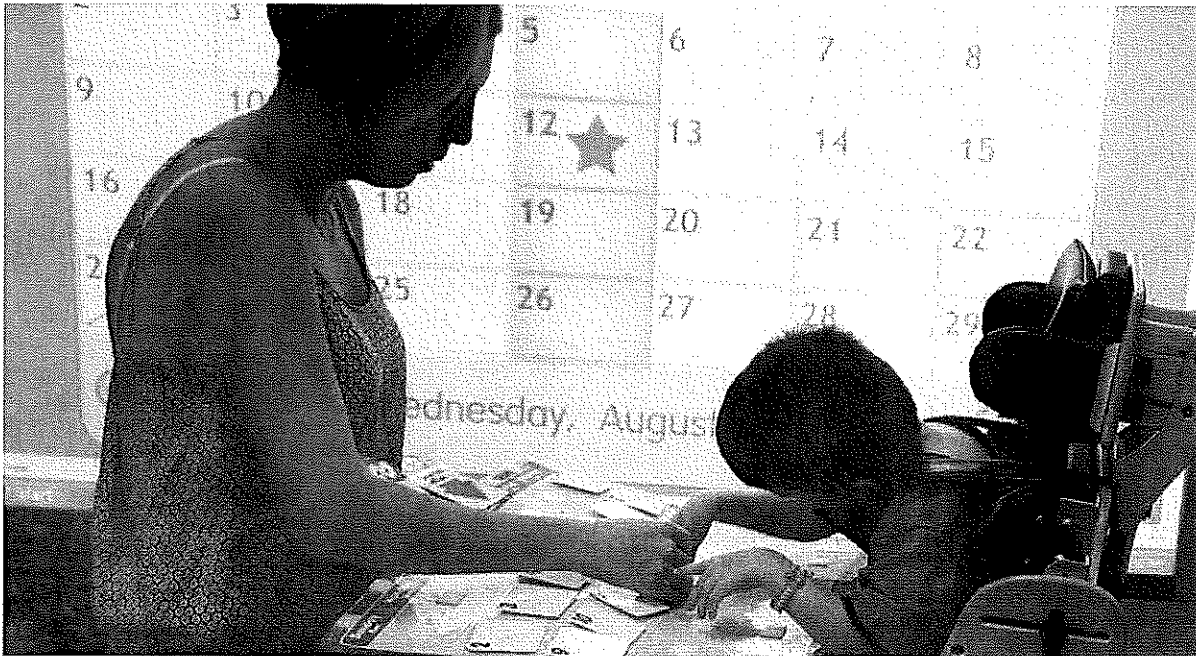
If you disagree with the CPSE's actions or refusal to take action in these matters, you can challenge the DOE's actions or refusal:

**Mediation:** During Mediation, you and a member of the CPSE sit down with a neutral third party who assists and encourages you and the DOE to reach an agreement. The mediator does not make a determination or issue an order. Instead, the mediator's job is to help you and the DOE come to an agreeable solution. You can make a request for mediation in writing to your local mediation center.

To learn more about mediation, please see: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/quality/parents.htm> or <http://nypeace.org/special-education-mediation/>.







**Impartial Hearing:** As a parent, you have the right to request an Impartial Hearing. This is a legal proceeding. During an Impartial Hearing, you will appear before an Impartial Hearing Officer (not a DOE employee) and present your side of the story. The Hearing Officer will listen to you and the representative from the DOE, take evidence from witnesses and documents, and make a written determination regarding how to resolve the issues that you have raised. Once an Impartial Hearing is requested, "pendency" (sometimes called "stay-put") applies. This means that your child will remain in his or her current placement for the duration of any due process proceedings until the matter is resolved or you have reached an agreement with the DOE. Impartial Hearing requests must be made in writing to the Impartial Hearing Office at:

Impartial Hearing Office  
131 Livingston Street  
Room 201  
Brooklyn, New York 11201  
Phone: (718) 935-3280  
Email: ihoquest@schools.nyc.gov

Your request for an Impartial Hearing must:

- Be made in writing to the Impartial Hearing Office;
- State your child's name, address, and student ID number (if your child has one at this time);
- State the name of the school your child attends (or specify that your child does not yet attend a school);
- Describe the facts relating to your concerns and your proposed solution; and
- Include your (the parent's) name and contact information.

A recommended request form, which you may use to request an Impartial Hearing, is available from the CPSE, the Impartial Hearing Office, or online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/EnterpriseOperations/ChiefFinancialOfficer/DFO/ImpartialHearingOffice/default.htm>.

**Resolution Process When an Impartial Hearing**

**Is Filed:** Within 15 days of your request for an Impartial Hearing, the DOE will work with you toward resolving the issues you've described in your Impartial Hearing request at a Resolution Meeting. There are three instances in which a Resolution Meeting will not be held:

1. If you and the DOE agree in writing to waive the Resolution Meeting, the Impartial Hearing Office must be notified and an Impartial Hearing will be scheduled within 14 calendar days.
2. If you withdraw your request for the Impartial Hearing, a Resolution Meeting does not need to be held.
3. If after documented attempts have been made by the DOE to schedule a Resolution Meeting and you do not participate or you did not waive the Resolution Meeting in writing, the Impartial Hearing Officer must be informed and the DOE has the right to ask that your request be dismissed.

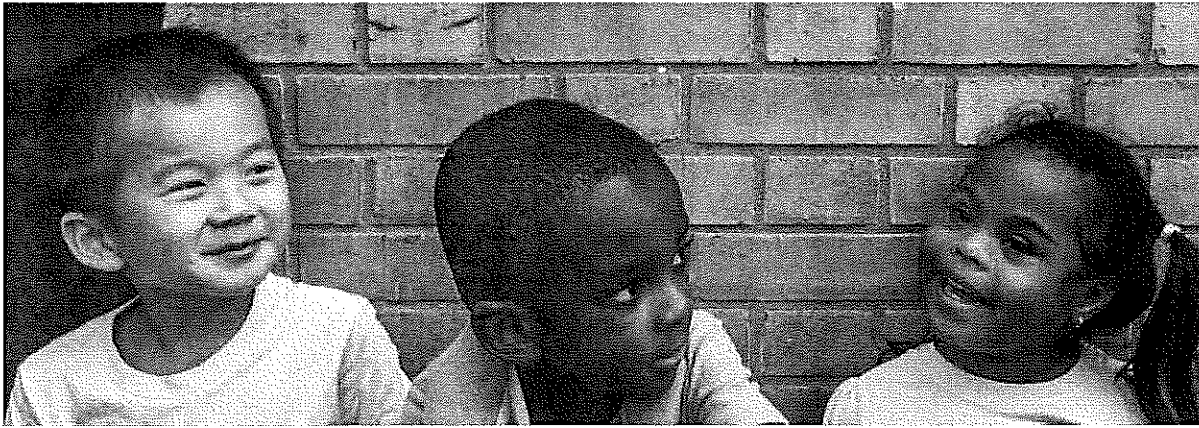
After receiving a request for an Impartial Hearing, the Hearing Office will provide you with a description of the Impartial Hearing process. You and the DOE will be contacted to schedule the hearing and you will be notified in writing of the scheduled date, time, and location of the hearing.

During the hearing, you and the DOE staff will explain your positions and submit evidence in support of your positions. After the completion of the hearing, the Hearing Officer will write a decision, a copy of which will be mailed to you. The Hearing Officer's decision is based entirely on evidence admitted at the hearing. It should

include the reasons and the basis for the decision. The decision informs you and the DOE of the right to appeal the decision to the New York State Review Officer. If you do not submit an appeal(s) within 40 days from the date of the receipt of the decision, all parties will be required to accept the Hearing Officer's decision.

**Appeals to the State Review Officer:** You may appeal a decision from the Impartial Hearing Office to the New York State Review Officer, as another step toward resolving disagreements. A request for an appeal is a legal process. While a lawyer is not required, procedures for submitting an appeal are specific and must be followed exactly to avoid delay or dismissal. This process is outlined at <http://www.sro.nysed.gov/overview.html>.





## Transitioning to Kindergarten

An important goal of preschool special education is to prepare a child to enter and succeed in kindergarten. Children enter kindergarten in September of the calendar year when they turn 5 years old. The kindergarten transition process begins the school year before, while a child is in preschool.

If your child receives preschool special education services, you will participate in two separate processes at the same time as you prepare for

your child to enter kindergarten: **applying to schools** and **developing a kindergarten Individualized Education Program (IEP)**.

For more information on these two processes and a schedule for when the New York City Department of Education (DOE) will hold information meetings, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/AcrossGrades/Kindergarten/default.htm>.

## Glossary of Terms

**Additional Parent Member:** A parent of a child with a disability in the school district who participates in meetings and assists a parent of a child with a known or suspected disability in making educational decisions for his or her child. Parents have the right to request participation of the Parent Member at CPSE meetings.

**Annual Goals:** Goals written on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that describe what the child is expected to achieve in the disability related area(s) over a one-year period.

**Annual Review:** A review of a student's special education services and progress that is completed at least once each school year at an IEP team meeting. For preschool students, this process is managed by the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

**Assistive Technology (AT):** Assistive Technology refers to tools that are necessary to help students benefit from instructional materials and communicate effectively. An AT device includes any item, piece of equipment, product, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability (e.g., a slant board, communication board or device, FM unit).

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** The Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) is a plan that is based on the results of a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to address problem behavior. At a minimum, the BIP will include a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs, and intervention strategies to address the problem behavior.

**Bilingual Evaluation:** A bilingual evaluation is an evaluation conducted in both English and a child's home or native language.

**Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE):** The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for coordinating the special education process for preschool children ages 3 to 5. CPSEs serve families in the district where a family resides, regardless of where children receive preschool services. There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. A Chairperson oversees the CSE office, including the CPSE. CSE/CPSE contact information can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/Special Education/Help/Contacts/CSECPSE>.

**Consent:** Consent must be "informed," which requires more than obtaining a parental signature. The following steps are taken for informed consent to be obtained:

- Parent must be fully informed, in the preferred language or other mode of communication, of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. Also, a parent must be notified of the child's records that will be released and to whom they will be released. This includes providing information about what testing will be completed, if any, and where the testing will take place.
- Parent must understand and agree in writing to the activity for which consent is sought.
- Parent must be made aware that the consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. However, if consent is revoked, the revocation is not retroactive, meaning that it does not negate an action that occurred after consent was given and before the consent was revoked.

**Declassification:** An IEP team's determination that a student no longer needs special education services.

**Due Process:** The provision in law that guarantees and protects the rights of parents, students, and the New York City Department of Education (DOE) during the referral, evaluation, and placement process.

**Early Intervention (EI):** The Early Intervention (EI) Program, under the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), supports families with children ages birth to 3 who have disabilities or developmental delays.

**Extended School Year Services (also known as Twelve Month School Year Services):** Extended School Year Services are recommended for some students who require services during July and August in order to prevent substantial regression in their development levels. A child will experience "substantial regression" if he or she will require an unreasonable amount of time at the beginning of the school year to reestablish Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives that the child had mastered at the end of the previous school year. Only if the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) determines that your child is likely to experience substantial regression if your child does not receive extended school year services will the CPSE recommend these services on the IEP. If so, the CPSE will include a statement that explains the reasons for this recommendation. Parents must consent to children receiving extended school year services.

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** Special education programs and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is an assessment that seeks to determine why a student engages in behaviors that impede learning and how the student's behavior relates to his or her environment.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** The IEP documents a child's eligibility for special education services and formalizes the school system's plan to provide special education programs and services that are appropriate for the child's unique needs. It contains specific information about a child and the education program designed to meet these needs, including:

- A child's current development and/or performance in school, and goals that can be reasonably accomplished in a school year;
- Special education and related services (including counseling and speech, occupational, or physical therapy), para-professional support, assistive technology, behavior intervention, and modifications;
- Participation with nondisabled children;
- Date services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided, and for how long; and
- Means of measuring a child's progress.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA):** A Federal law that gives students with disabilities the right to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment from age 3 to the year the student turns 21 years or graduates with a high school diploma.

**Interpreter/Translator:** A person who speaks and/or reads or writes the parent's preferred language or mode of communication or the child's language and interprets meetings for the parent and/or translates written materials for the family.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** The least restrictive environment (LRE) means the environment in which a child with a disability is educated alongside his or her nondisabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. LRE considerations mean that placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools, or other removal from the general educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved. The least restrictive environment is therefore different for each child.

**Limited Mobility:** A student with limited mobility is one who utilizes a mobility device—such as a wheelchair, walker, crutches, or cane—to negotiate the environment, or any student who negotiates the school environment with difficulty and/or at a slower pace than his or her peers, whether it is due to muscle weakness, lack of endurance, or any other reason. Students with specific mobility impairments, whether physical or sensory, for whom the design of building may pose barriers, must be offered access to programs to the extent required by law.

**Management Needs:** This means the amount of adult supervision and any necessary environmental modifications required to meet a student's needs. This must be indicated in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

**Mediation:** Mediation is a confidential, voluntary process that allows parents and the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to resolve disputes without a formal due process hearing. A mediator is a neutral third party who helps the parties to express their views and positions and to understand the other's views and positions. The mediator's role is to facilitate discussion and help parties reach an agreement, not to recommend solutions or take positions or sides.

If parties reach agreement, that agreement is binding and may not be appealed.

**Occupational Therapy:** Occupational therapy is a related service that will help a child maintain, improve, or restore adaptive and functional skills, including fine motor skills and oral motor skills in all educational activities.

**Orientation and Mobility Services:** These services are designed to improve a child's understanding of spatial and environmental concepts and use of information he or she receives through the senses (e.g., sound, temperature, vibrations) for establishing, maintaining, and regaining orientation and line of travel. Orientation and mobility services are provided to students with visual impairments.

**Paraprofessional:** A paraprofessional is a person who provides assistance (e.g., behavior management, health services, transportation) to either the entire class or an individual or a group of students.

**Physical Therapy:** Physical therapy is a related service that uses activities to maintain, improve, or restore a child's functioning (including gross motor development, ambulation, balance and coordination) in various settings (including but not limited to the classroom, bathroom, playground, and staircase).

**Preferred Language:** The language that a parent feels most comfortable speaking. This may or may not be the language regularly spoken at home.

**Private Evaluation:** An assessment conducted by an individual not employed by the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and paid for by the family or through the family's insurance.

**Recommendation:** This is the determination of the provision of special education program and services made at a Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting.

**Reevaluation:** A reevaluation is an evaluation conducted for a student with a disability who already receives special education services. A request for a reevaluation can be made by the student's parent, teacher, or school district. A reevaluation will not be conducted more than once a year unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.

**Referral:** A referral begins the special education evaluation process to determine whether the student has a disability and requires special education services.

**Related Services:** Services that may be given to students with disabilities to help support and assist their participation in their school program. These services must be recommended on the

Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are provided either individually or in groups of no more than five. Related services may include: counseling, school health services, hearing education services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/ language therapy, orientation and mobility services, and "other support" services.

**Requested Review:** A team meeting to review a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to determine if it continues to meet his or her needs. This review may be requested at any time by a parent, a teacher, or other school staff member.

**Speech/Language Therapy:** Speech/language therapy is a related service that helps to improve a child's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in academic and social situations throughout the school environment, with a focus on improving the child's communication skills.

# Contacts

## Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for coordinating the special education process for preschool children ages 3 to 5. CPSEs work with families in the district where a family resides (lives), regardless of where children receive services or go to preschool. There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. A chairperson oversees the office, including the CPSE in it.











CSE/CPSE contact information is available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/Special Education/Help/Contacts/CSECPSE>.

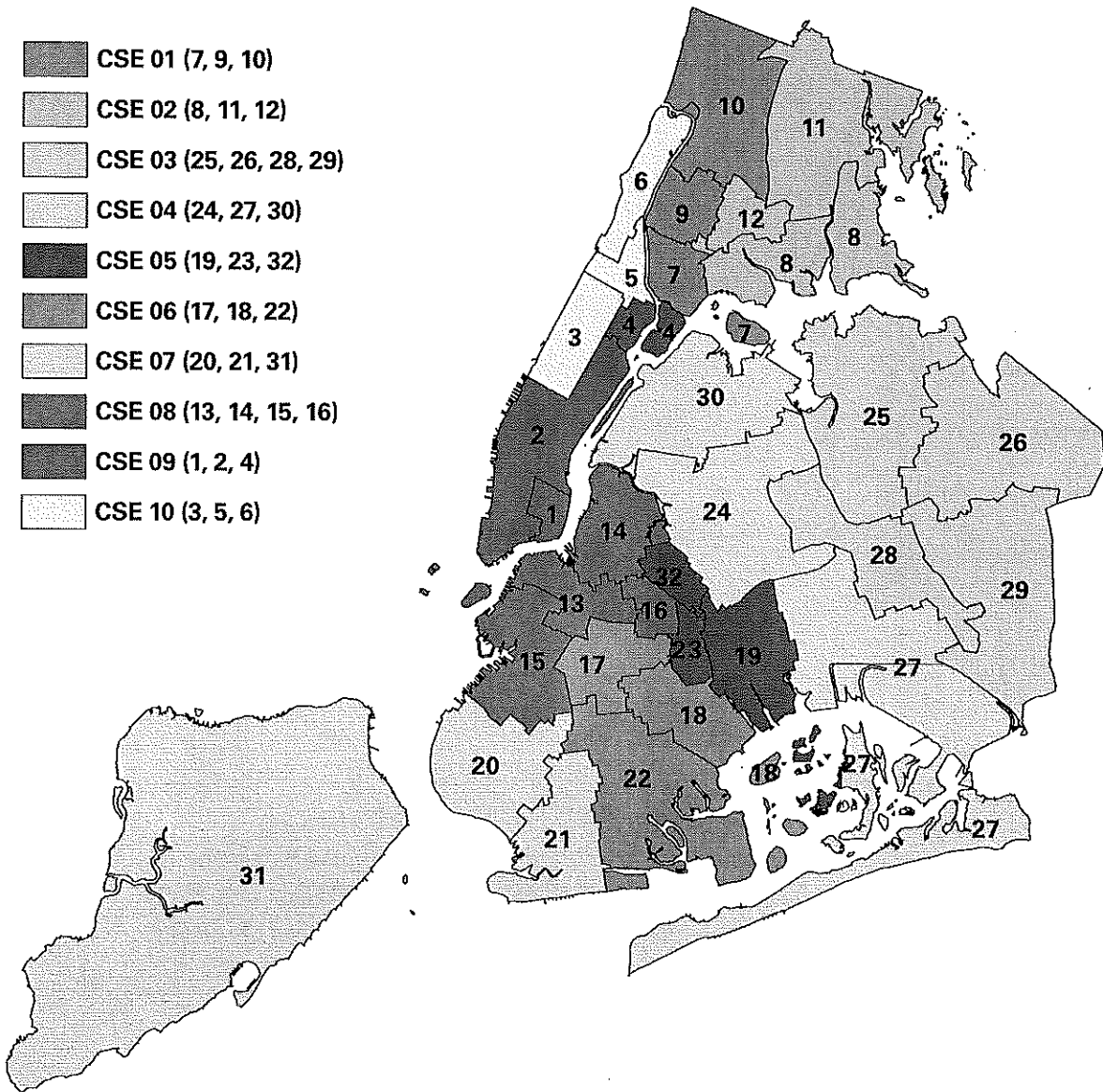
If you don't know what district you live in, call 311 or use the New York City Department of Education (DOE)'s School Search tool at <http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch/>. To use School Search, enter your child's home address at the top and click "Search." The website will give you the zoned school for your address. Look below the name of the school to see which school district the school is located in; that is your district. Each CPSE covers several school districts.

CSE	District	Address	Phone	Fax
1	7, 9, 10	One Fordham Plaza, 7th Floor Bronx, NY 10458	(718) 329-8001	(718) 741-7928/7929
2	8, 11, 12	3450 East Tremont Avenue, 2nd Floor Bronx, NY 10465	(718) 794-7420 Espanol: (718) 794-7490	(718) 794-7445
3	25, 26	30-48 Linden Place Flushing, NY 11354	(718) 281-3461	(718) 281-3478
3	28, 29	90-27 Sutphin Boulevard Jamaica, NY 11435	(718) 557-2553	(718) 557-2620/2510
4	24, 30	28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5th Floor Long Island City, NY 11101	(718) 391-8405	(718) 391-8556
4	27	82-01 Rockaway Boulevard, 2nd Floor Ozone Park, NY 11416	(718) 642-5715	(718) 642-5891
5	19, 23, 32	1665 St. Marks Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11233	(718) 240-3557/3558	(718) 240-3555
6	17, 18, 22	5619 Flatlands Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11234	(718) 968-6200	(718) 968-6253
7	20, 21	415 89th Street Brooklyn, NY 11209	(718) 759-4900	(718) 759-4970
7	31	715 Ocean Terrace, Building A Staten Island, NY 10301	(718) 420-5790	(718) 420-5787
8	13, 14, 15, 16	131 Livingston Street, 4th Floor Brooklyn, NY 11201	(718) 935-4900	(718) 935-5167
9	1, 2, 4	333 7th Avenue, 4th Floor New York, NY 10001	(917) 339-1600	(917) 339-1450
10	3, 5, 6	388 West 125th Street New York, NY 10027	(212) 342-8300	(212) 342-8427



# CSE School Districts

-  CSE 01 (7, 9, 10)
-  CSE 02 (8, 11, 12)
-  CSE 03 (25, 26, 28, 29)
-  CSE 04 (24, 27, 30)
-  CSE 05 (19, 23, 32)
-  CSE 06 (17, 18, 22)
-  CSE 07 (20, 21, 31)
-  CSE 08 (13, 14, 15, 16)
-  CSE 09 (1, 2, 4)
-  CSE 10 (3, 5, 6)



## New York City Department of Education (DOE) Contacts

Always first contact your CPSE administrator with questions about your child's preschool special education services. See page 36 for CSE/CPSE contact information. The following DOE contacts are also available:

Topic	Contact
Special Education	SpecialEducation@schools.nyc.gov
Related Services	RelatedServices@schools.nyc.gov
Transitioning to Kindergarten	Turning5@schools.nyc.gov
Pre-K for All Enrollment	ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov
Pre-K for All Programs	EarlyChildhood@schools.nyc.gov
DOE Special Education Hotline	(718) 935-2007
Students in Temporary Housing	(718) 391-6845 / MPonzio@schools.nyc.gov

## Early Childhood Direction Center (ECDC)

The Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs), funded by the New York State Education Department, provide free confidential information and referral for families and professionals about services for young children with suspected or diagnosed developmental delays or disabilities. You can call or email your borough's ECDC to talk about early intervention, preschool special education services, early childhood programs, and the transition to kindergarten and school-age special education services.

Borough	Phone	Email	Website
Bronx	(347) 271-8159	maura@bils.org	www.ecdcbronx.org
Brooklyn	(718) 437-3794	ksamet@adaptcommunitynetwork.org	www.adaptcommunitynetwork.org
Manhattan	(212) 746-6175	ecdc@nyp.org	nyp.org/ecdc
Queens	(718) 215-1299	cwarkala@queenscp.org	www.ecdcqueens.org/
Staten Island	(718) 226-6670	lkennedy30@northwell.edu	www.siu.edu/childhood

## Parent Support and Information Centers

Phone	Email	Website
<b>Advocates for Children</b>		
1 (866) 427-6033	info@advocatesforchildren.org	<a href="http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/who_we_serve/early_childhood">http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/who_we_serve/early_childhood</a>
<b>INCLUDEnyc</b>		
(212) 677-4650	info@INCLUDEnyc.org	<a href="http://www.includenyc.org/">http://www.includenyc.org/</a>
<b>Parent to Parent NY, Inc.</b>		
1 (800) 866-1068 (718) 494-3469	mfegeley@ptopnys.org	<a href="http://parenttoparentnys.org/offices/staten-island/">http://parenttoparentnys.org/offices/staten-island/</a>
<b>Sinergia/Metropolitan Parent Center</b>		
(212) 643-2840 (866) 867-9665		<a href="http://www.sinergiany.org/parents-center/parent-center">http://www.sinergiany.org/parents-center/parent-center</a>
<b>United We Stand of New York (Brooklyn and Queens)</b>		
(718) 302-4313	<a href="http://www.uwsofny.org/contact">http://www.uwsofny.org/contact</a>	<a href="http://www.uwsofny.org/">http://www.uwsofny.org/</a>

Additional resources are available on the DOE's preschool special education webpage at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/AcrossGrades/Preschool/default.htm>.



Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, New York 10007

For additional information **dial 311**  
or visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation>